



By JOHN McLEROY.

CHAPTER XXXI.
LEE'S RETREAT.

He presents a bold front to Meade for a whole day, and then moves away deliberately. The horrors of the retreat—The Cavalry Dashes for Lee's Train—Rough Riding Through Darkness and Rain—The Confederate Cavalry Outmaneuvered and Outfought. Kilpatrick's Brilliant Leadership.

No Pursuit.

Gen. Abner Doubleday, in his book, "Chancellorsville and Gettysburg," has this to say:

"When Pickett's charge was repulsed and the whole plain covered with fugitives, we all expected that Lee would command at Waterloo of 'Up guards, and at them!' would be repeated, and

the battle was really over. He did not think that Lee was going to give up in that way without still another offensive demonstration.

The Movement by the Flanks.

Meade had handled his army safely and conservatively, keeping the Sixth Corps in reserve for any starting emergency. At this distance of time it seems probable quite as well, since he did not have the Sixth Corps in readiness to dash over the stone wall and across on the heels of Pickett thru the Confederate line, that he refrained from the countercharge altogether. He did issue a very wise order for the Fifth Corps to move out in the direction of Lee's right flank. This was safe, scientific and promised rich results. The Fifth Corps, in spite of its fighting on the second day, had really suffered less than any other corps except the Sixth.

over, and that there was nothing left for him but to get back to Virginia as quickly as possible. Yet he took this step with the same deliberation which he displayed in crossing the Potomac after Antietam. All the long day of July 4 the Confederate pickets maintained their positions in front of the Union skirmishers, as splendid and defiant as ever, and acting as if still fully bent upon a program of aggression. In the meantime Lee and his troops were speeding back toward the Cumberland Valley and the Potomac, the endless miles of wagons laden with spoils which they had gathered from the fruitful farms and well-stocked storehouses of that wealthy country. Imboden, with fresh troops, both infantry and cavalry, had been ordered to take charge of these trains, which stretched over 15 miles in length and were drawn by some 10,000 horses and mules. He was to start from Cashtown with all speed, making his way by Chambersburg and Hagerstown to the banks of the Potomac, crossing that river at the point which had been left at Falling Waters four miles below Williamsport.

While Imboden was pushing on to Chambersburg the army would take up the march by the way of Fairfield, a gap in the South Mountain, thus all the time covering the trains from an attack of our cavalry, which was making its way around Lee's flank to intercept him before he could reach the Potomac. Lee's orders were for the movement of the troops to begin at sunset and continue during the night. Hill's Corps was to lead off, followed by Longstreet's, with Ewell's bringing up the rear. These movements were in a way screened by a deluge of rain which came up about noon and soon had the fields and roads flowing with torrents. While the Confederates could march thru this to escape, it was not

John D. Imboden gives an impressive description:

"After dark I set out from Cashtown to gain the head of the column during the night. My orders had been peremptory that I should be no halt for any cause whatever. If an attack should happen to any of the trains, it was immediately to be put out of the road and abandoned. The column moved rapidly, considering the rough roads, and the darkness, and from almost every wagon for many miles, issued heartrending wails of agony. For four hours I hurried forward on my way to the front, and in all that time I was never out of hearing of the groans and cries of the wounded and dying. Scarcely one in a hundred had received adequate surgical aid, owing to the darkness and the fact that there were no ambulances. Many of the wounded in the wagons had been without food for 36 hours. Their torn and bloody wounds, their matted and matted hair, their emaciated and still oozing wounds. Very few of the wagons had even a layer of straw in them, and the march by the way of Fairfield, it was enough to have killed strong men, if long exposed to it. From nearly every wagon as the teams trotted on, urged by whip and shout, came such cries and shrieks as these:

"Oh, God! Why can't I die?"

"Oh, God! Oh! For God's sake, stop just for one minute. Take me out and leave me to die on the roadside."

"I am dying! I am dying! My poor wife, my dear children; what will become of you?"

"My God! Will no one have mercy and kill me?"

"Some were simply moaning; some were praying, and others uttering the

"To add to our perplexities still further, the report reached me a little after sunrise that the Federals in large force held Williamsport. I did not fully credit this, and decided to push on. Fortunately, the report was untrue. After a great deal of desultory fighting and harassments along the road during the day nearly the whole of the immense train reached Williamsport, the afternoon of the 5th. A part of it, with Hart's Battery, came in next day, Gen. Young having halted and turned his attention to guarding the road from the west with his cavalry. We took possession of the town to convert it into a great hospital for the thousands of wounded we had brought from Gettysburg. Required to take pictures of the place, we went to cooking for the sick and wounded, on pain of having their kitchens occupied for that purpose by my men. They readily complied. A large number of surgeons had accompanied the train, and these at once pulled out their coats and went to work, and soon a vast amount of suffering was mitigated. The bodies of a few dead soldiers, who had been killed in the march, were buried. All this became necessary because the tremendous rains had raised the river more than 10 feet above the fording place, and the wagons could not be ferried across the river. There were two small ferries, but they were not immediately put into requisition to carry across those of the wounded who were forced to have their wounds dressed, thought they could walk to Winchester. Quite a large number were able to do this, so that the 'flats' were kept running all the time."

The Indefatigable Kilpatrick.

On the morning of July 4 Gen. Kilpatrick was informed of the retreat of Lee's army and that a heavy train of wagons was moving on the road to Hagerstown, which train he was expected to capture and destroy. Kilpatrick directed his staff at once for Emmitsburg, where he would find Col. Huey's Brigade, which he would take with him. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon he reached Emmitsburg, finding Huey waiting eagerly for him, and the column swept on without a halt for the Monterey Gap in the South Mountain, for which the Confederates were making a stand. A portion of Stuart's cavalry was encountered at Miller's and forced off the road. The top of the mountain was soon gained, and the long miles of wagons seemed within reach. Night was rapidly coming on, and it was raining in torrents. The Confederate rear guard opened upon the cavalrymen with artillery and musketry, and at the same time Stuart attacked Col. Huey, who was bringing up the rear. The road thru the gap was narrow and steep, and a steep ravine on one side and a deep ravine on the other. This did not deter Kilpatrick nor his men, whom he led on a charge thru the pelling darkness. The Confederates were forced back and many prisoners taken. Still heavier perils confronted the cavalry, since the enemy was forming his line in the darkness, and the rain obscured the movements constantly arriving. Pennington's Battery, ever at hand when sharp, quick work was needed, was brought up, and repulsed the enemy's artillery with its usual success. The column was ordered forward to clear the road and attack the train, which he did in the brilliant manner characteristic of him. In this instance a by-road to Smithsburg had been found by which the 1st Va. Cav., under Lieut. Col. Preston, moved to intercept the train, which was then at the head of Ewell's Corps. The guard of teamsters were driven off, and the whole train heavily laden with the spoils of the country, was destroyed, save some 30 wagons which were abandoned. With wounded officers, who were sent back with the rest of the prisoners to Frederick, Md. By 9 o'clock on the morning of July 5, Kilpatrick had 1,350 prisoners on his hands, with one battle flag and a large number of horses and mules and several hundred wounded. This exploit, known as the engagement of Monterey Gap, which was sharp and full of vicissitudes and daring from the first, Kilpatrick lost 150 men, 10 wounded and 28 missing. It was a brilliant piece of work for the cavalry, in which it had badly outnumbered its enemy. Stuart, who was trying to bring his best to come to the rescue of his train, but had been successfully held in check by Col. Pennington Huey with his brigade. Suddenly, leaving this objective point, Stuart set out around thru Emmitsburg to Mechanicstown to cross the mountain and pen up Kilpatrick in the Valley. Kilpatrick learned of his approach in time, and went to position on three hills which commanded the mountain roads by which Stuart was expected. On the first hill Huey's Brigade was posted with Pennington's artillery, forming the first line of battle. On the second hill, to the rear and right, was Richmond's Brigade with Elder's Battery, and still farther to the rear and right was Custer's Brigade with Pennington's Battery.

The Fight at Smithsburg.

Stuart opened the attack about 5:30 o'clock, but showed at once how much he was suffering from the well-directed artillery fire directed upon him. He persisted in the attack for an hour, when, seeing his hopeless position, he ceased with characteristic suddenness, and withdrew his men in the direction of Wrightsville. Kilpatrick did not pursue for he was not glad to see Stuart go and leave him in possession of his rich spoil of prisoners, wagons and other captures. Kilpatrick felt badly about Stuart's attack, but he succeeded in turning the fruits of his victory over to Gen. French. He learned that Stuart had gone to Hagerstown, where he was barricading the roads and intrenching to protect the train, which filled the roads between there and Williamsport.

The morning of July 8 Kilpatrick started out to find Stuart. Gen. Buford came up with his division, and as he outranked Kilpatrick the latter placed his command at Buford's disposal. After a brief consultation it was decided that Buford should go on to Williamsport and attack, while Kilpatrick would execute his original intention against Stuart. He succeeded in capturing Stuart, who was expecting him in quite another direction. That portion which Kilpatrick encountered was driven in some confusion to the northward toward Greencastle and Gettysburg. Kilpatrick was now in one of those dangerous entanglements which were his delight and in which his genius shined brightest. From prisoners captured he learned that Hood's whole division of infantry was marching straight upon him at a distance of only a few miles. He had to come to a sudden halt, and he was in a very brief space of time, therefore, or the crushing force of infantry on his flank would be added to the cavalry on his front. Kilpatrick was now in a most desperate position. He left Richmond's Brigade to hold Hood in check, and with the other two rushed off to help Buford destroy the train. Some time after dark both divisions went into bivouac. Crossroads, on the road to Boonsboro, they had four days of brilliant, exciting work, full of hardships and killing perils, but they were surrounded and caught the entire party.

don with glory. They had dashed thru the darkness and rain by way of rugged mountain passes and ravines into the very midst of the enemy, cut out and destroyed his wagon trains, outflanked his cavalry, and captured his heavy masses of infantry saved Lee's whole mass of transportation from the clutches. The spectacle of Stuart, driven back by Kilpatrick's rear guard, while the advance was forcing Monterey Pass and swooping down on Ewell's train; of Stuart's being compelled to make a frenzied rush on a wide circuit to the north to get into the Valley before Kilpatrick; of his being so easily beaten off when he attempted to rescue the prisoners, are very bright pictures in the history of the cavalry of the Army of the Potomac. It was paying off with interest its discomfitures on the Peninsula and the plains of Massachusetts.

Stuart's Report.

Stuart's report of these operations is complicated, and on its face appears disingenuous. He has to explain many things, and he qualifies them to the utmost. He says that Kilpatrick captured 1,480 wagons captured near Monterey was a gross exaggeration, with not more than 40 wagons captured. He admits the great danger of his train, but says that the wagons were parked there, and the enterprise and gallantry of the attacks by Buford and Kilpatrick. In his report he says:

"The cavalry, excepting two brigades with Gen. Fitz Lee, were now pretty well concentrated at Hagerstown, and one column, under Col. Chambers, was pushed directly down the road after the enemy, while Robertson's two regiments and Jenkins's Brigade kept to the left of the road, moving in parallel direction with Chambers. A portion of the Stuart Horse Artillery also accompanied the movement. The first charge was gallantly made by the leading brigade (Chambers's), now numbering only a few hundred men, the 9th and 13th Va. Cav. participating with marked gallantry. The column on the flank was now brought up to attack the enemy in flank, but the obstacles, such as post-and-rail fences, delayed its progress so long that the enemy had time to fall back, and the column was forced to dismount and fight the battle of Chambersburg. The enemy's Brigade was ordered to dismount and deploy over the difficult ground, and the attack was made with marked boldness. Lieut. Col. Witcher, a usual, distinguishing himself by his courage and conduct. The enemy, thus isolated, was closely pressed, and the mounted cavalry, but made one effort at a countercharge, which was gallantly met and repulsed by Col. James B. Gordon, commanding the 9th Va. Cav. Col. Jones, who exhibited under my eye individual prowess deserving special commendation. The repulse was soon after converted into a rout by Col. Jones's (11th Va. Cav.), Jones's Brigade, which took the road, under the gallant leadership of his Colonel, with drawn sabers, and charged down the ramparts under a fearful fire of artillery."

"The enemy was now very near Williamsport, and this determined and vigorous attack in the morning of July 8, 1862, raised the siege of that place, and leave in hasty discomfiture by the Dranesville road. His withdrawal was 'forced' by night, which set in just as we were about to enter the town of Williamsport. An important auxiliary to his attack was rendered by Brig. Gen. Fitz Lee, who reached the vicinity of Williamsport by the Greenbelle road very opportunely, and participated in the attack with his accustomed spirit. 'Great credit is due the command for the fearless and determined manner in which they rushed upon the enemy, and compelled him to lose his hold upon the main portion of the transportation of the army. Without this attack it is certain that the enemy would have fallen into the hands of the enemy, for while some resistance was made by Gen. Imboden, still the three years' experience of the peculiar conformation of the ground, overlooked by hills and approached by six plain roads, go to show conclusively that the enemy was not even a competent commander on the part of his command could have saved those wagons from the torch of the enemy. I communicated with him after opening the road by a Lieutenant whom I met at a short distance from the town. Officers present with Gen. Imboden during the attack assure me I am right in the foregoing opinion. I was apprised, however, that Lieut. Col. Longstreet had arrived at Hagerstown."

"As a part of the operations of this period I will here report that about 60 prisoners were taken to Lee's division, while in the special charge of Gen. Imboden, en route to Williamsport, near Mercersburg, were captured by the enemy. A corps of inquiry has been convened to inquire into the circumstances of this capture. I therefore forbear animadversion on the subject."

(To be continued.)

The 12th N. J. and 125th C. T.

Editor National Tribune: I served with both these regiments, and would like a sketch of both.—W. L. Seran, Paducah, Ky.

The 12th N. J., one of Fox's fighting regiments, was organized at Woodbury, Sept. 4, 1862, and mustered out July 13, 1865. It was commanded by Col. Robert Johnson. John H. Willets and John Williams, both of whom were killed in action, were in command. It fought in Hay's Brigade, losing 24 killed, 32 wounded and 22 missing, a total of 78. A corps of inquiry has been convened to inquire into the circumstances of this capture. I therefore forbear animadversion on the subject."

The 210th Pa.

Editor National Tribune: Please give a short sketch of the 210th Pa. Cav.—G. S. Gebbe, Iuka, Ill.

The 210th Pa. Cav. was organized at Harrisburg in October and November, 1861, and finally mustered out July 13, 1865. It was commanded by Col. Edward C. Williams, who resigned Oct. 9, 1862, and at the time of final muster, Lieut. Col. Thomas J. Jordan was in command. The 210th was also known as the 82d Volunteers or Lochiel Cavalry Corps. It lost 12 killed and 157 from disease, etc.—Editor National Tribune.

The 58th Ill.

Editor National Tribune: Please give a short history of the 58th Ill., giving date of organization.—William Harvey, New Decatur, Ala.

The 58th Ill. was organized at Chicago from Dec. 24, 1861, to Feb. 7, 1862, and all members but veterans mustered out Feb. 7, 1865, when the organization, composed of veterans and recruits, was consolidated into a battalion of four companies, and out of a total enrollment of 1,000 men, 1,000 were killed and 99 from disease, etc. Its total of killed and wounded was 587, and of its members died in Confederate prisons, 122 crossed the Rapidan with 425 men, 177 of which were killed or wounded at the Wilderness. Spotsylvania, Lieut. Col. Thos. H. Davis was killed at the Wilderness. After Cold Harbor the regiment was reduced to 90 muskets. It belonged to Hay's Division, Second Corps, and out of a total enrollment of 1,000 men, 1,000 were killed and 99 from disease, etc. Its total of killed and wounded was 587, and of its members died in Confederate prisons, 122 crossed the Rapidan with 425 men, 177 of which were killed or wounded at the Wilderness. Spotsylvania, Lieut. Col. Thos. H. 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